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ABSTRACT

In the fall of 1998, the Connecticut Library Association, in cooperation with the State Library, surveyed Connecticut's libraries to examine the number and status of library assistant (LA) staff positions in the state. A total of 249 surveys were returned--a response rate of 22%. This report concludes that: there is a wide range of LA positions in Connecticut libraries; positions are classified under at least 200 job titles; larger libraries have more positions; most positions are in public and school libraries; more than two-thirds of LA positions are paid hourly rather than salaried; salaried positions are paid on average more than hourly positions; academic libraries pay more on the high end than other types of libraries, and school libraries pay less on the low end; the majority of LAs receive some employee benefits with the highest percentage of benefits in academic libraries; labor union membership is a factor in wage scales; and LAs that supervise other staff are generally paid more than non-supervisors. Thirteen tables present data on: LA positions by library type (academic, corporate, public, school, special) and size; wages; and benefits, supervision, and union membership. Attachments include Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data, the questionnaire; and a list of Connecticut towns and geographical regions. (AEF)

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A STUDY OF LIBRARY ASSISTANT POSITIONS IN CONNECTICUT LIBRARIES

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Prepared by Leon Shatkin, State Library Data Coordinator
Connecticut State Library, Division of Library Development
November 1998

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BACKGROUND

In the fall of 1998, the Library Technical Assistant Section of the Connecticut Library Association, in cooperation with the State Library, surveyed Connecticut's libraries in order to examine the number and status of Library Assistant staff positions in the state. A two page survey form was designed and mailed in early September to 1,150 libraries. The due date for response was October 8, 1998.

RETURNS

A total of 249 survey forms were returned, a response rate of about 22%. Table I shows the number of responses by type of library.

Table I Response Rate

Type	Number sent	Number returned	Per Cent returned	Per Cent of all returns
Academic	49	12	24%	5%
Public	186	92	49%	37%
School	784	128	16%	51%
Special	131	17	13%	7%
TOTAL	**1,150**	**249**	**22%**	**100%**

An additional 17 survey forms were returned but not included in the tabulations because of missing data or data that was not comparable.

LIBRARY ASSISTANT POSITIONS

Using the definition in the survey form[1], 217 libraries reported a total of 822 Library Assistant positions. The balance, 32 libraries, reported that they have no Library Assistant positions. Table II shows the number of positions reported by type of library.

[1] A Library Assistant position is any one that requires broad training, knowledge and skills in library services and operations. It may or may not require a two-year LTA Associate's degree. A Library Assistant may work either independently or under the supervision of a professional librarian.

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Table II Library Assistant Positions by Library Type

Type	Libraries	LA positions
Academic	11	77
Corporate	2	2
Public	91	556
School	105	171
Special	8	16
TOTAL	**217**	**822**

Overall, the libraries that responded to the survey have an average of 3.3 Library Assistant positions. As might be expected, larger libraries have, on average, more Library Assistant positions than smaller libraries. Table III shows the total number of Library Assistant positions reported by libraries in each of 8 collection size groups and the average number of Library Assistant positions per library.

Table III Library Assistant Positions by Library Size

Items held	Libraries	LA positions	Average LA positions per library
More than 150,000	13	158	12.2
100,000-150,000	18	120	6.7
50,000-100,000	28	184	6.6
25,000-50,000	39	158	4.1
10,000-25,000	105	163	1.6
5,000-10,000	36	31	0.9
1,000-5,000	6	6	1.0
Less than 1,000	4	2	.50
TOTAL	**249**	**822**	**3.3**

WAGES[2]

On average, Library Assistant positions tend to be less than full time. Only 334 positions (41%) work 35 hours or more per week. In addition, many positions, especially those in school libraries and media centers, work less than 12 months per year. Most Library Assistants are paid an hourly rate rather than a salary. Comparing their average annual earnings on an hourly basis suggests that salaried Library Assistants earn more than hourly Library Assistants. (Assuming both work 34 hours per week 12 months per year, the salaried Library Assistant would receive $24,831 compared to the hourly Library Assistant's $19,466.)

[2]For related wage data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, see Attachment A.

Table IV Annual Wage Projections by Wage Basis

Wage basis	Number of positions	% of all	Total hours per week	Average hours per week	Average wage (34 hrsx52 weeks)
Hourly	587	71%	13,331	22.7	$19,466 annually ($11.01/hr)
Salaried	235	29%	7,959	33.9	$24,831 annually ($14.04/hr)
TOTAL	**822**	**100%**	**21,290**	**25.9**	**$22,149 annually ($12.17/hr)**

Table V Wage Spread by Wage Basis

Wage basis	High	Median	Low
Hourly	$23.16	$10.78	$5.15
Salaried	$46,000	$27,699	$4,781

Table VI Average Wage by Wage Basis and Library Type

Wage Basis	Academic	Corporate	Public	School	Special
Hourly	$11.79	$14.50	$10.19	$10.79	$12.78
Salaried	$31,868	$21,000	$25,929	$15,798[4]	$23,880

Table VII Wage Spread by Wage Basis and Library Type

Type	High	Median	Low
Academic Hourly	$18.07	$13.28	$7.50
Academic Salaried	$46,000	$32,220	$11,211
Corporate Hourly[3]	$14.50	$14.50	$14.50
Corporate Salaried[3]	$21,000	$21,000	$21,000
Public Hourly	$23.16	$10.30	$5.15
Public Salaried	$45,374	$27,750	$7,803
School Hourly	$16.00	$11.22	$6.15
School Salaried	$45,000	$15,800[4]	$4,781[4]
Special Hourly	$16.54	$12.74	$10.35
Special Salaried	$28,000	$22,259	$21,000

[3] Only 2 Library Assistant positions were reported by corporate library responders.
[4] Most school positions are for 10 months or less.

Table VIII

Wage Spread by Wage Basis and Geographical Region[5]

	Wage Basis	
	Salaried	Hourly
Region I (Northwest)		
LA positions	16	91
High	$46,000	$13.90
Median	$17,690	$11.00
Low	$9,000	$6.00
Average	$21,149	$10.47
Region II (North Central)		
LA positions	54	157
High	$41,600	$18.62
Median	$27,071	$12.10
Low	$8,816	$6.70
Average	$26,111	$12.34
Region III (Northeast)		
LA positions	14	99
High	$30,161	$15.00
Median	$18,015	$9.15
Low	$4,781	$5.15
Average	$16,980	$9.46
Region IV (Southwest)		
LA positions	58	54
High	$45,374	$21.63
Median	$21,750	$11.46
Low	$10,182	$7.50
Average	$22,500	$12.14
Region V (South Central)		
LA positions	85	128
High	$45,000	$23.16
Median	$28,301	$9.90
Low	$7,803	$5.75
Average	$27,369	$10.26
Region VI (Southeast)		
LA positions	8	58
High	$38,964	$16.54
Median	$28,000	$11.78
Low	$15,000	$5.90
Average	$27,306	$11.45

[5]For a list of Connecticut towns by geographical region, see Attachment C.

BENEFITS, SUPERVISION, UNION MEMBERSHIP

Most Library Assistant positions include some employee benefits; they are generally not supervisory positions and not unionized. Among salaried Library Assistants, 68% are union members, while only 23% of hourly Library Assistants are unionized. That does appear to impact their relative wage levels in Table IX although the data do not include the number of hours worked annually by salaried Library Assistants. Only 26% of Library Assistants supervise other library staff; but for hourly supervisors, both their highest and median hourly rates are 24.4% higher than non-supervisors. The highest paid salaried supervisor, at $46,000, earns only 2.2% more than the highest paid non-supervisor's $45,000, but the median rate of supervisors who are on salary is 14.2% higher than salaried non-supervisors, $28,000 compared to $24,518.

Table IX Benefits, Supervisors, Unionized by Library Type

	Benefits?		Supervise?		Union?	
Type	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Academic	69 (90%)	8 (10%)	22 (29%)	55 (71%)	47 (61%)	30 (39%)
Corporate	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	1(50%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Public	280 (50%)	275 (50%)	157 (28%)	397 (72%)	132 (24%)	422 (76%)
School	132 (78%)	38 (22%)	33 (20%)	129 (80%)	112 (70%)	4 9 (30%)
Special	13 (81%)	3 (19%)	1 (6%)	15 (94%)	0 (0%)	16 (100%)
TOTAL	**495 (60%)**	**325 (40%)**	**214 (26%)**	**597 (74%)**	**291 (36%)**	**519 (64%)**

Table X Unionized by Wage Basis

Wage	Unionized?	
basis	Yes	No
Hourly	135 (23%)	444 (77%)
Salaried	156 (68%)	75 (32%)
TOTAL	**291 (36%)**	**519 (64%)**

Table XI Unionized Wage Spread by Wage Basis

Wage	Unionized			Non-Unionized		
basis	High	Median	Low	High	Median	Low
Hourly	$23.16	$12.00	$7.19	$18.62	$10.00	$5.15
Salaried	$46,000	$26,129	$4,781	$45,000	$24,000	$7,803

Table XII Supervisors by Wage Basis

Wage basis	Supervise? Yes	No
Hourly	142 (25%)	436 (75%)
Salaried	72 (31%)	161 (69%)
TOTAL	**214 (26%)**	**597 (74%)**

Table XIII Supervisors Wage Spread by Wage Basis

Wage basis	Supervisors High	Median	Low	Non-Supervisors High	Median	Low
Hourly	$23.17	$12.52	$6.00	$18.62	$10.06	$5.15
Salaried	$46,000	$28,000	$10,967	$45,000	$24,518	$4,781

CONCLUSIONS

There is a wide range of library assistant positions in Connecticut Libraries. Holders of these positions are classified under at least 200 job titles. Only 34% of the positions reported for this study (276 of 822) were, in fact, called "Library Assistant" in the survey response. Larger libraries have more library assistant positions, and most positions are in public and school libraries. More than two-thirds of library assistant positions are paid hourly rather than salaried, and salaried library assistant positions appear to be paid on average more than hourly positions. Positions in academic libraries pay more on the high end than other types of libraries and school libraries pay less on the low end. The majority of library assistants receive some employee benefits with the highest percentage of benefits in academic libraries. Labor union membership is a definite factor in wage scales, and library assistants that supervise other staff are generally paid more than non-supervisors.

ATTACHMENT A

Occupational Employment and Wage Data 1996, published by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://stats.bls.gov/oes/oes%5Fdata.htm> , gives national and state wage information for two positions comparable to the Library Assistant positions in this study. They are #31505 Library Technical Assistants and #53902 Library Assistants and Bookmobile Drivers.

The duties of Library Technical Assistants are to "assist librarians by furnishing information on library sciences, facilities, and rules; by assisting readers in the use of card catalogs and indexes to locate books and other materials; and by answering questions that require only brief consultation of standard reference. May catalog books or train and supervise clerical staff."

BLS reports the following 1996 wage levels for Library Technical Assistants.

	Number employed	Mean wage	Median wage
Connecticut	1,520	$12.32	$11.86
National	71,450	$10.07	$9.64

The BLS defined duties of Library Assistants and Bookmobile Drivers are: "Library Assistants: Compile records; sort and shelve books; issue and receive library materials, such as books, pictures, cards, slides, audio and video recordings, and microfilm. Locate library materials for loan and replace materials in shelving area (stacks) or files according to identification number and title. Register patrons to permit them to borrow books, periodicals, and other library materials. Bookmobile Drivers: Operate a bookmobile or light truck that pulls a book trailer to specific locations on a predetermined schedule and assist with providing services in mobile library."

For Library Assistants and Bookmobile Drivers BLS reports the following 1996 wage levels:

	Number employed	Mean wage	Median wage
Connecticut	2,620	$8.45	$7.40
National	150,060	$8.40	$8.00

ATTACHMENT B

CLA Library Technical Assistant Section

LIBRARY ASSISTANT SALARY SURVEY

TOWN/INSTITUTION/CORPORATE NAME

LIBRARY NAME

SURVEY COMPLETED BY

YOUR TITLE

TELEPHONE NUMBER

TODAY'S DATE

Please check the category that best fits your library:

Academic	❑	Corporate	❑	Public	❑
School	❑	Special	❑	Other	❑

Population served:

(Public libraries, please use town population; school and academics, use student, faculty and staff numbers; other libraries, use appropriate population.)

Library collection size, number of items held:

More than 150,000	❑	10,000 - 25,000	❑
100,000 - 150,000	❑	5,000 - 10,000	❑
50,000 - 100,000	❑	1,000 - 5,000	❑
25,000 - 50,000	❑	Fewer than 1,000	❑

What was the library's total annual operating expenditures for the fiscal year 1997/1998?

$

What was the library's total staff expenditures, including salaries, hourly wages and benefits, for all paid staff for the fiscal year 1997/1998?

$

How many total hours per week does the paid staff of the library work?
(If the number of hours varies, select a typical week.)

Of the total hours worked by paid staff per week:
How many are worked by staff with MLS (Master of Library Science) degrees?
How many are worked by other than MLS staff?

Over Please ⇨⇨

ATTACHMENT B

Please provide the following information for each Library Assistant library position:

(A Library Assistant position is any one that requires broad training, knowledge and skills in library services and operations. It may or may not require a two-year LTA Associate's degree. A Library Assistant may work either independently or under the supervision of a professional libranan.)

	Position title	Hours worked typical week	Annual salary/ hourly rate	Y or N Receives benefits?	Y or N Supervises others?	Y or N Union position?
1						
2						
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Please photocopy this page if additional lines are needed.

- RETURN COMPLETED SURVEY FORM BY FIRST CLASS MAIL BEFORE OCTOBER 9, 1998, TO:

Connecticut State Library
Att: State Library Data Coordinator
231 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1537

THANK YOU!

ATTACHMENT C

Connecticut Towns and Geographical Regions

	TOWN	REGION
1	Andover	3
2	Ansonia	5
3	Ashford	3
4	Avon	2
5	Barkhamstead	1
6	Beacon Falls	1
7	Berlin	2
8	Bethany	5
9	Bethel	1
10	Bethlehem	1
11	Bloomfield	2
12	Bolton	3
13	Bozrah	6
14	Branford	5
15	Bridgeport	4
16	Bridgewater	1
17	Bristol	2
18	Brookfield	1
19	Brooklyn	3
20	Burlington	2
21	Canaan	1
22	Canterbury	3
23	Canton	2
24	Chaplin	3
25	Cheshire	5
26	Chester	5
27	Clinton	5
28	Colchester	3
29	Colebrook	1
30	Columbia	3
31	Cornwall	1
32	Coventry	3
33	Cromwell	5
34	Danbury	4
35	Darien	4
36	Deep River	5
37	Derby	5
38	Durham	5
39	Easst Haven	5
40	East Granby	2
41	East Haddam	5
42	East Hampton	5
43	East Hartford	2
44	East Lyme	6
45	East Windsor	2
46	Eastford	3
47	Easton	4
48	Ellington	3
49	Enfield	2
50	Essex	5
51	Fairfield	4
52	Farmington	2
53	Franklin	3
54	Glastonbury	2
55	Goshen	1
56	Granby	2
57	Greenwich	4
58	Griswold	6
59	Groton	6
60	Guilford	5
61	Haddam	5
62	Hamden	5
63	Hampton	3
64	Hartford	2
65	Hartland	2
66	Harwinton	4
67	Hebron	3
68	Kent	1
69	Killingly	3
70	Killingworth	5
71	Lebanon	6
72	Ledyard	6
73	Lisbon	6
74	Litchfield	1
75	Lyme	6
76	Madison	5
77	Manchester	2
78	Mansfield	3
79	Marlborough	2
80	Meriden	5
81	Middlebury	1
82	Middlefield	5
83	Middletown	5
84	Milford	5
85	Monroe	4
86	Montville	6
87	Morris	1
88	Naugatuck	1
89	New Britain	2
90	New Canaan	4
91	New Fairfield	4
92	New Hartford	1
93	New Haven	5
94	New London	6
95	New Milford	1
96	Newington	2
97	Newtown	4
98	Norfolk	1
99	North Branford	5
100	North Canaan	1
101	North Haven	5
102	North Stonington	6
103	Norwalk	4
104	Norwich	6
105	Old Lyme	6
106	Old Saybrook	5
107	Orange	5
108	Oxford	1
109	Plainfield	3
110	Plainville	2
111	Plymouth	1
112	Pomfret	3
113	Portland	5
114	Preston	6
115	Prospect	1
116	Putnam	3
117	Redding	4
118	Ridgefield	4
119	Rocky Hill	2
120	Roxbury	1
121	Salem	6
122	Salisbury	1
123	Scotland	3
124	Seymour	5
125	Sharon	1
126	Shelton	5
127	Sherman	1
128	Simsbury	2
129	Somers	3
130	South Windsor	2
131	Southbury	1
132	Southington	2
133	Sprague	6
134	Stafford	3
135	Stamford	4
136	Sterling	3
137	Stonington	6
138	Stratford	4
139	Suffield	2
140	Thomaston	1
141	Thompson	3
142	Tolland	3
143	Torrington	1
144	Trumbull	4
145	Union	3
146	Vernon	3
147	Voluntown	6
148	Wallingford	5
149	Warren	1
150	Washington	1
151	Waterbury	1
152	Waterford	6
153	Watertown	1
154	West Hartford	2
155	West Haven	5
156	Westbrook	5
157	Weston	4
158	Westport	4
159	Wethersfield	2
160	Willington	3
161	Wilton	4
162	Winchester	1
163	Windham	3
164	Windsor	2
165	Windsor Locks	2
166	Wolcott	1
167	Woodbridge	5
168	Woodbury	1
169	Woodstock	3

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Connecticut Towns and Geographical Regions

	TOWN	REGION
1	Barkhamstead	1
2	Beacon Falls	1
3	Bethel	1
4	Bethlehem	1
5	Bridgewater	1
6	Brookfield	1
7	Canaan	1
8	Colebrook	1
9	Cornwall	1
10	Goshen	1
11	Kent	1
12	Litchfield	1
13	Middlebury	1
14	Morris	1
15	Naugatuck	1
16	New Hartford	1
17	New Milford	1
18	Norfolk	1
19	North Canaan	1
20	Oxford	1
21	Plymouth	1
22	Prospect	1
23	Roxbury	1
24	Salisbury	1
25	Sharon	1
26	Sherman	1
27	Southbury	1
28	Thomaston	1
29	Torrington	1
30	Warren	1
31	Washington	1
32	Waterbury	1
33	Watertown	1
34	Winchester	1
35	Wolcott	1
36	Woodbury	1
37	Avon	2
38	Berlin	2
39	Bloomfield	2
40	Bristol	2
41	Burlington	2
42	Canton	2
43	East Granby	2
44	East Hartford	2
45	East Windsor	2
46	Enfield	2
47	Farmington	2
48	Glastonbury	2
49	Granby	2
50	Hartford	2
51	Hartland	2
52	Manchester	2
53	Marlborough	2
54	New Britain	2
55	Newington	2
56	Plainville	2
57	Rocky Hill	2
58	Simsbury	2
59	South Windsor	2
60	Southington	2
61	Suffield	2
62	West Hartford	2
63	Wethersfield	2
64	Windsor	2
65	Windsor Locks	2
66	Andover	3
67	Ashford	3
68	Bolton	3
69	Brooklyn	3
70	Canterbury	3
71	Chaplin	3
72	Colchester	3
73	Columbia	3
74	Coventry	3
75	Eastford	3
76	Ellington	3
77	Franklin	3
78	Hampton	3
79	Hebron	3
80	Killingly	3
81	Mansfield	3
82	Plainfield	3
83	Pomfret	3
84	Putnam	3
85	Scotland	3
86	Somers	3
87	Stafford	3
88	Sterling	3
89	Thompson	3
90	Tolland	3
91	Union	3
92	Vernon	3
93	Willington	3
94	Windham	3
95	Woodstock	3
96	Bridgeport	4
97	Danbury	4
98	Darien	4
99	Easton	4
100	Fairfield	4
101	Greenwich	4
102	Harwinton	4
103	Monroe	4
104	New Canaan	4
105	New Fairfield	4
106	Newtown	4
107	Norwalk	4
108	Redding	4
109	Ridgefield	4
110	Stamford	4
111	Stratford	4
112	Trumbull	4
113	Weston	4
114	Westport	4
115	Wilton	4
116	Ansonia	5
117	Bethany	5
118	Branford	5
119	Cheshire	5
120	Chester	5
121	Clinton	5
122	Cromwell	5
123	Deep River	5
124	Derby	5
125	Durham	5
126	Easst Haven	5
127	East Haddam	5
128	East Hampton	5
129	Essex	5
130	Guilford	5
131	Haddam	5
132	Hamden	5
133	Killingworth	5
134	Madison	5
135	Meriden	5
136	Middlefield	5
137	Middletown	5
138	Milford	5
139	New Haven	5
140	North Branford	5
141	North Haven	5
142	Old Saybrook	5
143	Orange	5
144	Portland	5
145	Seymour	5
146	Shelton	5
147	Wallingford	5
148	West Haven	5
149	Westbrook	5
150	Woodbridge	5
151	Bozrah	6
152	East Lyme	6
153	Griswold	6
154	Groton	6
155	Lebanon	6
156	Ledyard	6
157	Lisbon	6
158	Lyme	6
159	Montville	6
160	New London	6
161	North Stonington	6
162	Norwich	6
163	Old Lyme	6
164	Preston	6
165	Salem	6
166	Sprague	6
167	Stonington	6
168	Voluntown	6
169	Waterford	6

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